REMARKS

Claims 1-52 are pending in the instant application. Claims 25-28 were withdrawn pursuant to a restriction requirement. The Examiner has objected to the IDS submitted on with the filing of the application because one reference was not presented as an English translation and two others were illegible. Additionally, the Examiner has provisionally rejected claims 1-52 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being allegedly unpatentable over claims 1-4, 6-14, 16-24, 29-32, 34-42, and 44-52 of co-pending Application No. 09/730,683. Morever, claims 1-24 and 29-52 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over a combination of an article "Searching for .COM-ponents" by Harbert (Harbert), a press release "DesignWin Upgrade Tackles Key OEM Supply Chain Management Issues" (DesignWin), and U.S. Patent No. 5,712,985 issued to Johnson et al. (Johnson). The Applicants have cancelled claims 1-52 and present new claims 53-83 for consideration. The Applicants' submit that new claims 53-83 render the double patenting rejections moot. Reconsideration of the provisional rejections is hereby requested. No new matter has been entered. Support for new claims 53-83 may be found throughout the specification and within the drawings.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

Claims 1-24 and 29-52 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over a combination of Harbert, DesignWin, and Johnson. As indicated above, claims 1-52 have been cancelled and new claims 53-83 presented for consideration. The Applicants' submit that new claims 53-83 are patentable over Harbert, DesignWin, and Johnson because none of Harbert, DesignWin, and Johnson, either alone or in combination, teach or suggest all of the elements recited in Applicants' claims 53-83.

New claims 53, 64, 65, and 73 recite a method, system, and storage medium for

managing a supply chain within a multi-enterprise environment. Claims 53, 64, and 73 recite specifically "identifying purchase prices of components that are incurred by a contract manufacturer that manufactures products using the components, the products subject to purchase by a buyer under an agreement with the contract manufacturer;

comparing the purchase prices incurred by the contract manufacturer with purchase prices available to the buyer for the same components from a component supplier;

for components in which the contract manufacturer incurs a purchase price greater than the purchase price available to the buyer, generating and transmitting to the component supplier a request to authorize the contract manufacturer to purchase a quantity of the component from the component supplier at the purchase price available to the buyer; and

in response to an affirmative response by the component supplier, generating and transmitting an authorization letter to the contract manufacturer, the authorization letter authorizing the contract manufacturer to purchase the component directly from the component supplier."

None of these elements are taught or suggested by Harbert, DesignWin, and Johnson, either alone or in combination. In particular, none of the cited references teach requesting authorization from a component supplier to provide prices for selected components to a contract manufacturer that performs manufacturing activities for a manufacturer under an agreement. Nor does any of the cited references teach or suggest providing authorization to the contract manufacturer to purchase the selected components directly from the component supplier in response to approval of the request for authorization. For at least these reasons, the Applicants submit that claims 53, 64, and 73 are patentable over Harbert, DesignWin, and Johnson. Claim 65 recites substantially the same elements as those recited in claims 53, 64, and 73 and further defines the nature of the comparing purchase prices. For at least this reason, and for the reasons advanced above with respect to claims 53, 64, and 73, the Applicants submit that claim 65 is in condition for allowance. The Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the

outstanding rejections of claims 53, 64, 65, and 73.

Claims 54-63 depend from claim 53, claims 66-72 depend from 65, and claims 74-83 depend from claim 73. For at least these reasons, the Applicants submit that claims 54-63, 66-72, and 74-83 are also patentable over Harbert, DesignWin, and Johnson. Reconsideration of the outstanding rejections is respectfully requested.

No new matter has been entered and no additional fees are believed to be required. However, if any fees are due with respect to this Amendment, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 09-0458 maintained by Applicants' attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,

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